

K. D., A.

AN
EXPOSTULATORY
ADDRESS

To all who frequent Places of
Diversion and Gaming, &c.

By A. Darby of Coalbrookdale

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To all who receive this of

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AN EXPOSTULATORY
ADDRESS, &c.

Respected Friends,

I HUMBLY beg you will give a little Cessation from your Diversions and Amusements, to hearken unto one who is concerned to lay before you some important interesting Truths, highly necessary for all to consider and duly weigh, which are;

That the great God in his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, hath created us all for Glory and Happiness. And in Order thereunto, hath made each of us immortal, that is; we are to exist in everlasting Duration which shall never terminate, but through an infinite Series of Eternity shall continue to be. We shall indeed in a few Days undergo a Change of Station, the Mode of Existence will be altered, but we ourselves shall still continue to be: Not suffering in our intellectual Faculties, but by putting off our mortal Cloathing

ing, the Clogs of human Nature, shall become more enlivened and quick in our sensitive Apprehension of Things.

These great Truths are so implanted in the Mind, abstract from any outward Information, that not any Person of common Understanding can gainsay this Intelligence, which the Almighty Father hath placed in the Minds of all. Then how doth it manifest the parental Care of the great Author of our Being, in thus placing the glorious Light of this important Truth in our Hearts; To give us the Knowledge of the original from whence we sprung, the Cause why he hath placed us here, and the Consequences productive of our Actions! And not only doth this divine Truth inform us, but it hath such Efficacy of Power to influence our Conduct in the Pursuit of Virtue, that we submitting to its Directions, shall not fail attaining unto the State of Glory our great Creator hath formed us for. And we have not only these great eternal Truths revealed unto us, by the internal Manifestations of his Holy Spirit; but through his unbounded Love and Condescension, hath permitted us to live in an Age, wherein we can read the Confirmation of these Truths, in the holy Scriptures, given forth by Men inspired by the same Holy Spirit.

Then, if you believe the great Truths contained therein, which I hope you do, they tell us; That, the
 Gen. ii. 7. Lord God formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul. That, there is a Spirit in
 Job xxxii. 8. Man, and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth him an

an Understanding. That there is an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for the righteous; and that there is also a Place of everlasting Punishment for the Unrighteous. That we need not say, who shall ascend into Heaven, to bring the Word down from above? or, who shall descend into the deeps, or go beyond the Seas to bring the Word up from thence? but the Word is very nigh, even in our Mouths, and in our Hearts, that we may hear it, and do it. For what may be known of God, is manifest in Men; for God hath shewed it unto them. That Jesus Christ is the eternal Word, which was with and is God: by whom all Things were made that was made. That in him was Life, and the Life is the Light of Men. That he is the true Light, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World. And he declareth of himself, saying; I am the Light of the World: he that followeth me, shall not walk in Darknes, but shall have the Light of Life. And the Apostle saith; for God who commanded the Light to shine out of Darknes, hath shined in our Hearts, to give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ. But we have this Treasure in Earthen Vessels, that the Excellency of the Power may be of God, and not of us. For the Lord saith; without me ye can do Nothing. And that we must not say, Lo here, or, Lo there; for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you. Also the Apostle; Know ye not that ye are the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any Man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy:

*1 Pet. i. 4.
Mat. xxv.
Deut. xxx.
Rom. x.
Rom. i. 19.
John i.
John viii. 12.
Cor. iv. 6, 7.
John xv. 5.
Lukexvii. 21.
1 Cor. iii.
16, 17.*

destroy : For the Temple of God is holy, which Temple
 1 Cor. vi. 19. *ye are. What, know you not that your Body is the*
Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye
have of God, and ye are not your own? Again, ye
 2 Cor. vi. 16. *are the Temple of the living God; as God hath said,*
I will dwell in them, and walk in them. That, the
 Tit. ii. 11, *Grace of God that bringeth Salvation; hath appeared*
 12, 13. *to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and*
worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and
godly in this present World; Looking for that blessed
Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God,
and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith; to Day if ye
 Psa. xcv. 7, 8 *will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts. Then we*
 Heb. iii. 7, 8 *find this is the Day allowed, wherein to qualify our-*
selves for the Mansions of eternal Bliss; by working
 Phil. ii. 12. *out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling, that we*
may be ready to appear before the King of Kings
 Rom. xiv. *and Lord of Lords, before whom every Knee shall*
 11. *bow, and every Tongue shall confess. Who is a God*
 1 Sam. ii. 3. *of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed. Who*
is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity with Ap-
probation. And the Lord himself declareth, wide is
 Matt. vii. *the Gate and broad is the Way that leadeth to Destruc-*
 13, 14. *tion: That, strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way*
which leadeth unto Life. That if we intend to follow
 John xiv. 6, *Jesus Christ the appointed Saviour, who declareth him-*
self to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life: and
that no Man cometh unto the Father but by him: We
 Mat. xvi. 24, *must deny ourselves, take up our Cross daily, and*
 26. *follow him. For what is a Man profited, if he shall gain*
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the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall Luke ix. 23.
a Man give in Exchange for his Soul? That whosoever
shall confess him before Men, those will he also con-
fess before his Father which is Heaven. But whoso- Mat. x. 32,
ever shall deny him before Men, those will he deny 33.
also before his Father which is in Heaven. That it is
not every one that saith unto him Lord, Lord, that Mat. vii. 21.
shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that
doeth the Will of his Father which is in Heaven. That
we ought to Watch and Pray, that we enter not into Mat. xxvi.
Temptation: Lest he come upon us at unawares as a 41.
Thief in the Night, and we be taken away to Judg- 1 Thes. v. 2, 4
ment before we are prepared.

Now if you believe these great Truths, Then I query: What is this strait Gate and narrow Way which leadeth unto Life? Are Balls and Assemblies for Dancing, the strait Gate and narrow Way? Are Card Assemblies and Gaming, the strait Gate and narrow Way? Are Plays, Operas, Concerts and Masquerades, the strait Gate and narrow Way, which leadeth unto eternal Life? Are these Places of Diversions and Amusement you are so assiduous in frequenting, the only sure Places wherein you can be qualified for Candidates for the Crown of eternal Glory? Can the practising these Diversions purchase unto you the Robe of Righteousness, *washed and made white in the Blood of the Lamb?* Which all must be cloathed with that come unto Mount Sion, unto the City of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, to the innumerable Company of Angels; to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven, to God the Judge

Rev. vii. 14.
 Heb. xii. 22, 23.

Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect. Is the pursuing these Diversions the sure Way of *Self-Denial*, a taking up the Cross and following holy Jesus? Is this a being crucified unto the World and the World unto you? Are these Practices a confessing Christ before Men, which will cause him to confess you before his Father which is in Heaven? Is this a doing the Will of your Father which is in Heaven? Is this a Watching unto Prayer, a being in

Gal. vi. 1, 4. *Readiness against the Midnight Cry come?*

Mat. xxv. 6.

Church of
England public Baptism
of Infants,
and Order of
Confirmation
by your
Bishops.

Oh, I intreat you, allow a little Space from your Diversions, to reflect upon these awful Things! Consider what is meant by the *wide Gate and broad Way which leadeth unto Destruction*: Is it not a giving up unto your own Will, *i. e.* indulging yourselves in the Pleasures of the World? Remember what you promised, or what was promised for you, in what you call Baptism: *i. e.* to renounce the Devil and all his Works, the Pomp and Glory of the World, with all covetous Desires of the same, and the carnal Desires of the Flesh, so that you will not follow nor be led by them; and obediently keep Gods holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of your Life. Also in what is called the Order of Confirmation by your Bishops, you then again renew all these Promises and Vows, to keep and observe the same all the Days of your Life. Are these Promises made in Sincerity of Heart, or are they barely Words of Form? I humbly desire you will examine yourselves; for to me it appeareth, that whether you consider them as only Words of Form, or did intend to fulfill them, you

Err

Err from the Truth; for if you were sincere, you contradict yourselves in Practice; or if you look upon them as Words of Form, you are equally culpable in the Sight of God: who hath declared by the Apostle, *that he is not mocked: for whatsoever a Man soweth Gal. vi. 7, 8. that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his Flesh, shall of the Flesh reap Corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap Life everlasting.* And also incur the Woes, pronounced by the Almighty against thole, *who draw near unto him with their Mouth; Isa. xxix. 13. and honour him with their Lips; but their Hearts are Mat. xv. 8. removed far from him.* Oh! Consider, *if ye live after Rom. viii. 13. the Flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

Then, can the practising these Diversions, either abroad or at home, be called a *sowing to the Spirit, a mortifying the Deeds of the Body?* Is it not rather a living in the Pomp and Vanities of the World, in the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and the Pride of Life? which are the Devil's Snares to corrupt the Mind, and render it incapable of *entering into the Eph. v. 5. Kingdom of Christ and of God: in which no unclean Person can have an Inheritance.* And doth not the Apostle say, *the Friendship of the World is Enmity with Jam. iv. 4. God? whosoever therefore will be a Friend of the World is the Enemy of God.* That while we live in Pleasure, *1 Tim. v. 6. we are dead while we live: dead to the State of Righteousness, Purity and Holiness, without which no Man Heb. xii. 14. shall see the Lord.*

Oh Consider, this Time allowed us here to prepare for another World, is so short compared with that

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which

which is to come, that no adequate Idea can be formed thereof, with any Degree of Propriety; This little Span being only as a Point, and Eternity as an infinite Line: How soon will one terminate, but the other, when Millions of Millions of Ages are over, is still beginning to be! Then here is no Time for Diversions, nor vain Amusement: but to *lay aside every Weight,*
 • Heb. xii. 1, 2. *and the Sin which doth so easily beset us, and run with Patience the Race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our Faith; who for the Joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the Shame, and is set down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God.*

Mat. xxv. Oh that we may be all like those our Lord counted *Wise*; having our *Lamps burning*, ready to obey the Summons to meet *the Bridegroom*, and enter with him into the Habitation of the Just: Oh let us remember the fatal Consequences and Sentence of them who lived in Carelessness; who slumbered away their Time in Ease and Forgetfulness of their *Duty to their God*, and their own *everlasting Interest*; who had not their Lamps burning, these were shut out of the Kingdom of Rest and Peace; and the Lord declared unto them, *he knew them not.*

If any great Potentate upon Earth required your Attendance, would you not endeavour to procure every necessary, requisite to introduce and ensure you a favourable Reception?—Then who is calling you? Is it not the eternal God, who dwells on high, enthroned
 Exod. xv. 11. in everlasting Light? Who is *glorious in Holiness; fear-*
 Isa. xl. 12. *ful in Praises? Who created the Heavens, and meted*
them

them out with the Span? Who made the Worlds and the glorious Luminaries, to enlighten the wide Expanse? Who appointed their Being in the Firmament of his Power, and ordered the Periods of their Revolution? Who measured the Waters in the Hollow of his Hand, and comprehended the Dust of the Earth in a Measure? Who weighed the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance? Before whom all the Nations are as a Drop of a Bucket, and are counted as the small Dust of the Balance: Who appointeth the Times and the Seasons, and dispenseth unto us every Good which we enjoy? Who maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust? Mat. v. 45.

Oh then, *what manner of Persons ought we to be, in all holy Conversation and Godliness; industriously labouring to be cloathed upon with the Righteousness of Saints?* 2Pet. iii. 11. Rev. xix. 8.

Oh my Beloved Fellow Creatures! if these Reflections were suffered to take place in your Hearts, they would not only be productive of other Actions; but your Dress and Address would be changed; *your Conversation would be as becometh the Gospel of Christ.* Phil. i. 27. No Oaths, no Swearing nor profane Expressions, no taking the Name of God, in vain who declares he *will not hold them Guiltless that take his Name in vain.* Exod. xx. 7. Your Dress would be also plain and decent, agreeable to the high Profession you make, of being the Followers of humble Jesus.

The Women would be concerned to imitate the holy Women of Old, honourably recorded of in the

Tim. ii. 9. holy Scriptures; who did not adorn themselves with
 1 Pet. iii. 3. brodered or plaited Hair, with wearing Gold, Pearls,
 4. or costly Array; but with modest Apparel; with Shame-
 facedness and Sobriety; with the bidden Man of the
 Heart, which is not corruptible, even the Ornament of
 a meek and quiet Spirit, which is in the Sight of God
 of great Price. They would be warned by the Woes
 and Judgments denounced by the Almighty Father,
 against the haughty Daughters of Sion, who delighted
 in Superfluity and Gaiety of Dress; and whom he de-
 clared by his Prophet, he would smite with a Scab the
 1sa. iii. Crown of their Head: And instead of a sweet Smell,
 there should be a Stink; and instead of a Girdle, a
 Rent; and instead of well set Hair, Baldness; and in-
 stead of a Stomacher, a girding of Sack-cloth; and
 Burning instead of Beauty. And the Men, who dis-
 regarded his Law, should fall by the Sword and the
 Mighty in the War.

But if all these Exhortations and Warnings do not
 avail; I beseech you for his Sake who died for you;
 Tit. ii. 14. that he might redeem you from all Iniquity, and purify
 unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works:
 Think of these Things, and take up this good Reso-
 lution; that, let others do what they will, you will
 Josh. xxiv. 15. serve the Lord; and embrace the Offers of Salvation by
 Jesus Christ; who came to save us from our Sins, not
 Rom. vi. 1. in our Sins; for we are not to continue in Sin, that
 Rom. xii. 2. Grace may abound. We are not to be conformable to
 this World, but to be transformed by the renewing of our
 Minds, that we may prove what is that good, and ac-
 ceptable and perfect Will of God.

Repent

Repent then of your past Doings, saith one, who hath known the Terror of the Lord because of Sin, and am therefore engaged, in the universal Love of our God, who would have none to be lost, to intreat you all to fly with my Soul from the Wrath to come, unto God the Father; who will have Mercy and abundantly Pardon, altho' our *Sins* be as *Scarlet* and Isa. i. 18. the *Crimson dye*.

Oh Remember that God is serious, who hath created us for Glory, and offereth the Means whereby to attain unto that Glory! That Jesus Christ is serious, who died for us, and offereth us Redemption! That the Holy Ghost is serious, who doth appear in our Hearts, offering us Sanctification unto Life! Oh let us therefore accept and be saved! Let us hearken unto his Voice, who speaketh in us with *Authority*, as never *Mat. vii. 29* Man spake; telling us in the Cool of the Day, all that ever we have done; shewing us the Consequence of our Doings, and directing us how we may *purge our* *Heb. ix. 14.* *Consciences from dead Works, to serve the living God.*

And I beg of you young Men, that you will *remember your Creator now in the Days of your youth, while the evil Days come not, nor the Years draw nigh, when ye shall have no Pleasure in them. When the Dust shall return unto God who gave them, to be judged according to their Works: For God will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be Good or whether it be Evil. Then fear God and keep his Commandments; dedicate the Strength of your Days unto his Service, who saith, Vengeance is mine; I* *Rom. xii. 19.* *will*

31. *will repay.* Oh consider, what a *fearfull Thing it is to fall into the Hands of the living God*, who will recompence upon his *Enemies* his Wrath; And who are his Enemies? But those who act in Disobedience and open Violation unto his holy Law. Then *be not*
- Eph. v. 18. *Drunk with Wine wherein is Excess; but be filled with the Spirit:* That your Fruits may be Goodness, Righteousness and Truth. Oh! Call to remembrance the fatal End of those who were mighty to *drink strong Drink*, who sat till *Wine inflamed them*, who loved
- Isa. v. *Instruments of Music in their Feasts*, and *chanted to the Sound of the Viol*; who put the evil Day *afar off*, and did not remember the *afflicted*; who did not regard the *Work of the Lord*, neither considered the *Operation of his Hands*: For these, the Lord declared by his Prophet, *Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her Mouth without Measure; and their Glory, and their Multitude, and their Pomp, and he that rejoiceth shall descend into it.* Is the Almighty indeed changed? Doth he give more Liberty in this Age than he did to these? Have you obtained a Licence to lay the Rein upon the Neck, to do that which is Right in your own Eyes, to sin with Impunity? Your own Consciences tell you otherwise. If you will give yourselves Time for Reflection,
- Psa. vii. 11. *you may feel God angry with the wicked every Day.* All Disobedience unto the Law of God is Sin, and all Sin is Wickedness.

I humbly beseech you all, both Men and those of my own Sex, not to be offended at my thus exhorting with you, of the great Danger attending a Conduct so repugnant to Christianity, and so inconsistent

tent with your present and future Happiness: Neither conclude this Address cometh from a melancholly Enthusiast, who would restrain the Pursuit of proper lawful Liberty and Relaxation, for I can assure you I am not one of those; but am ready and willing, to agree and join in with that Liberty and Freedom the *Truth* doth allow, and which as professed Followers of our *Lord* and *Saviour Jesus Christ*, the great *Law-giver*, we ought not to exceed. We believe in him who declares himself to be the *Truth*: We believe his Laws and Commands to be Just, and right to be observed; that we ought to keep within the Bounds he hath prescribed, and tread in the same Path, which he hath declared all his Followers must walk in: that the deviating therefrom, will render us culpable in his Sight, and obnoxious to the Punishments consequent thereto. John xiv. 6.

Then I hope none will think hard, or censure my endeavours to stir up *the pure Mind* in you by *2 Pet. iii. 1.* *Way of Remembrance* of your Duty and everlasting Interest.

I am not of that Opinion, that we ought to reclude ourselves from the World, but that we keep ourselves from *the Evil* thereof; *using this World as not abusing* John. xvii. 15. *it*; enjoying the Blessings bestowed, *as good Stewards* 1 Cor vii. 31. *of the manifold Grace of God*, which will cause us to 1 Pet. iv. 10. witness this Saying fulfilled, *that Godliness is profitable* 1 Tim. iv. 8. *unto all Things, having Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.* For the glorious Effects of the *holy Spirit of Truth* in Man, is not confined only to open the spiritual Eye of Faith, whereby we have
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the Substance of Things hoped for; the Evidence of Things not seen; but also produceth a Change in the natural Capacity; our Understandings as Men will be polished, our Faculties brightened, and qualified for Converse and Commerce among Men. So that in a spiritual and natural Sense, we shall become as *Lights in the World, as a City set on an Hill that cannot be hid*: that Others seeing our good Works and the justness of our Doings, may have occasion to glorify the Father which is in Heaven on our Accounts.

Mat. v. 14,
16.

That you and I may become of that happy Number, who are thus concerned to glorify God, in an holy Life and Conversation here, that He in his infinite Mercy may glorify us with himself to all Eternity, is my sincere Desire and Prayer; having no other View in appearing in this public Manner, but to strive to persuade my Fellow Creatures, to embrace their eternal Good. And if I can be Instrumental to the saving one Soul from Destruction, I shall rejoice; believing in this great Truth, delivered by him who knew all Things, That there is Joy in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth, more than over Ninety and Nine just Persons, which need no Repentance.

Luke xv. 7.

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A. Darby

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